A REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION

Thursday, October 26. 1710.

METhinks on the Occasion of our new Elections, there is a differing Spirit gone out, among the poor Common People of *England*; differing at least, in degree, from all of that kind, that ever I observ'd among them in my Life—A Spirit of Rage, Fury, and Self-destruction; I can liken it to nothing so well, as to the Possession of the Swine, who when the Devil enter'd into them, did not fall upon one another, or upon their Keepers, or do Mischief to any but themselves ——— But away they run down a Precipice into the Sea ——— Our Poor unhappy People under the present Possession, are running upon all the fatal Precipices of Absolute Submission——Subjection to Tyranny, Obedience to Arbitrary Commands, giving up Constitution Priviledges, falling with Violence into the Gulph Persecution, and *with these*, into the entire Subversion of National Liberty.

My Hope of reclaiming them, and saving the Nation resolv'd upon its own Destruction, is very much upon the Gentlemen they have Chosen; and let them be never so high, never so forward in the new Delusions, when they come there, they will, by the Course of Things, be led to other Measures than these Mad People expect of them.

I remember, in the beginning of the Queens Reign, there was a Generation of Men among us, that fell into this very Extream; indeed they were not permitted to carry it so high —— But because her Majesty expres'd her Zeal for the Church, they thought that Zeal could no Way express itself, but in Ruining, Persecuting, and Destroying the *Dissenters* —— In like Case now, upon Advancing her Majesty's Hereditary Right to the Crown, they think this is no way to be done, but by bidding Defiance to Parliamentary Limitations; by crying up Non-Resistance, they run into the Extream of giving themselves up to Tyranny and Oppression.

As if the Church of *England* could not be Zealously espous'd, but by Persecuting of their Protestant Brethren; as if the Queen's Hereditary Right could be no Way Supported, but in Trampling under Foot the Legal Settlements of the Succession; and the Obedience of the Subject could be no otherwise Settled, but by Absolute Slavery to a Tyrant.

Her Majesty early convinc'd the Gentlemen of this Party, in the very beginning of her Reign, that the Zeal requir'd of them to Support the Church of *England*, was consisting very well with Tenderness and Charity to differing Persuasions, and consequently, with *Toleration* —— And upon many Occasions, the Queen thought it needful to let them know it —— And at last, to put an End to the Expectations of that kind among the Party, by letting them know positively, that the Toleration should be INVIOLABLY Maintain'd.

Who doubts, but her Majesty has an Hereditary Right to the Crown? As the Entail of that Crown, is reserv'd by Parliament; and the Inheritance being declar'd by Parliament to her Majesty, in Case of the Demise, or Legal Incapacities of the next Blood, that Possession had been Hereditary, tho' King *James* her Majesty's Father had been yet alive —— And this takes away all Occasion to enquire into the Legitimacy of the Pretender, or the Nature of the Abdication, as Things of no Moment; but this strongly binds the other part of the Argument, that her Majesty's Right is also Parliamentary, and indeed is, *as I have formerly expres'd it*, Parliamentarily Hereditary, and I think is no otherwise Hereditary.

Again, who doubts, but her Majesty, our Sovereign, is not to be Resisted; and yet who doubts at the same time, but a Tyrant is to be Resisted, has been Vigorously and Successfully Resisted, *Vide the London Clergy's Address*, and will be so again, *ditto*. Our Queen is a Legal, Just, Sovereign, Ruling by Law, and justly Exercising Legal Power; to Resist such a Queen, is not to Resist the Governour, *but Government*, which is the Ordinance of God, and which whoever Resists, recieves to himself Damnation; but this does not at all Lessen the Priviledge of Subjects Resisting Oppression, Resisting Tyrants, who set up *Will* for *Law*, and oppress the People contrary to Law.

If such Submission to the Absolute Will of the Prince is our Duty —— Pray, Gentlemen, why do you Choose Representatives? Of what use is a Parliament? If you have nothing to do, but to obey the Queen, then the Queen has nothing to do but to Command you; and Choosing Parliaments to preserve the Liberties of the People, to Support the Crown, and Guard the Constitution, is most Learned Politick Nonsense; doing a great deal of *something*, to signify *nothing*; if you are to Submit to the Will of the Prince, then her Majesty need have no concern about Funds, Taxes, Supplies, and raising Money; there needs nothing, but to Name a Set of Commissioners, to go through every Town, and to every House, and tell every Man, Sir, *Her Majesty has sent her Commands, that you send her forthwith, a Thousand Pounds*, or ten Thousand Pounds, as they please to say, *She has an immediate Occasion for it* —— The poor frighted Gentleman says, by Way of return —— *Lord, Sir, what does her Majesty mean? I have not so much Money in all the World* —— The Commissioners then, in kindness, and tenderness to his Condition, Reply, *Well, Sir, since it is so, and you have not so much, Her Majesty*

jesty is pleas'd to extend so much Grace to you, as to accept of what you have —— Provided, *you deliver it up to us immediately* —— Whereupon the Commissioners enter directly into the Poor Gentleman's House, and take away all his Goods, turning him and his Wife and Children naked into the Streets.

This is really the Case, if Non-Resistance be our Duty, and to talk of Parliaments *giving* Money, is Ridiculous; nay, the Queen herself (with her Majesty's Pardon) does not speak Sense, *I mean the Sense of the Doctrine*, when she desires the Commons to give Supplies, thanks them for them when given, and assuring them, they shall be applied to the Purposes for which they are given; for 'tis all her own, her Majesty may Command every Thing, for where nothing may be Resisted, nothing can be deny'd —— Parliaments, Laws, Privileges, Liberties, are all Nonsense, and of no manner of signification.

Now, Gentlemen, let us but see a few of you, who are Non-Resistance Champions, practise this Doctrine, and send up the Treasure you have gain'd under a Limited Government, and we shall then have a more unanswerable Argument against us; but till then, my Loyalty is expressed in a few Words; A Legal, Just, Prince, Ruling Justly, If I Resist him, I Resist Government itself, *which is the Ordinance of God*; but a Tyrant breaking the Laws, and oppressing the People, I both may Resist, and must; if I do not, I betray my Country, and my Posterity.

Now since the People are run into these Mad Extreams, and Folly seems to Govern the present Genius of the Nation; for my part, I am perswaded, the Parliament now Choosing, the Queen, and the Ministry, will find it necessary to State these Things right, and undeceive the poor People, that they may not carry Things on to such excesses, as may be fatal to themselves, as well as to others —— And therefore I am not at all afraid, let what Parliament will come together; it is not the present Interest of our Governours to tear Men to pieces: A Parliament Founded upon, and indeed the Life of the Constitution, will not give up one part of the People that Choose them, to be Plunder'd, Persecuted, and Devour'd by the other.

Those blinded Furies, that run about Mobbing for High-Church, and Damning *Dissenters* —— When the Parliament comes, they will be just Disappointed, as they were in the Year 1702; the Zeal for the New Changes cannot be meant, as the poor Deluded People mean, it is not Consistent with the present State of Things; no Rational Man can suppose the Government so Weak —— The Queen will not easily be made a Persecutor, nor can the Party carry on their Cause this Way; it is not for me to say, what will or will not be done —— But if I see any thing before me, you will find the Madness of this Blind Generation without Doors, will meet with a Check, and be entirely Disappointed in the Proceedings, whether of Queen, Parliament, or Ministry.

And this I may say too, without any Compliment to the New Ministry, nor do I speak it to that end; but I have two Views, in giving my Opinion;

1. To Check a little the Madness of a Party of Men among us, who are so Elevated with the Success they Fancy has attended their Affairs, and flatter themselves with hopes that all is their own, and that the Whigs, like *Mordecai's Jews*, are given up to them for a Prey —— They will find themselves mistaken; it is neither in their Power, nor is it in the Design —— I will not say that it may not be in the desire of some, and consequently in their Design, remotely —— But I say, it is not in the present Design, because 'tis evident, it is not in their Power.
2. To raise a little the Drooping Spirits of some Honest People, who are apt to give up all, and say we are lost and undone; that this Merciless, High, Tory Party carry all before them, and we are undone; *nil desperandum*, all's not lost that's in hazzard; the Whigs

Whigs may have loſt ſomewhat *that is nameleſs*, which I think they might well ſpare——But no Man is given up —— If we are Sold —— The Buyer will hardly get us delivered; if we are Bought, the Seller will hardly make good his Bargain; the Caſe to me is clear —— The Party that we fear, neither have ſo much Power to give up the Foundation, or ſo little Wit as to go about it.

Upon this Foot it is, I ſay, the Tory, High-flying Party will be Diſappointed in the preſent Adminiſtration, and even in the Parliament, which they think they have Choſen after their own Heart —— The Reaſon is plain, their Aim is overthrowing the Conſtitution, reſtoring Tyranny, and Diſſolving the Union with *Preſbyterians*, who they hate; this will not, cannot be done by the Parliament; ſuch Things may be done by Power oppreſſing Parliaments; but to deſtroy the Conſtitution by a Parliament, I think 'tis impoſſible, let the Members be what they will; and therefore, I ſay, this Party will be diſappointed.

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